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824 manufacturing baskets, sieves and mats; and still another 25 in the hunting activities of boys (arrows, bows, traps, glue.) Over 100 are known more particularly for their edible fruits or roots and 45 are greens or relishes; 230 are well-known in the everyday medical pharmacopœia, and of these 60 are magical. Among other well-known uses are those of the grasses and sedges (15) from which dancing or initiation costumes are made and those (12) connected with games. Some 5 were considered noxious weeds and 8 had certain taboos attached to them. Plants with conspicuous flowers are not specially observed, and one asks the ordinary man in vain as to the name and uses of the more delicate flowering plants; on the whole, he is far better acquainted with trees than with shrubs and grasses, unless used as relishes.

824 What is striking is that the ordinary man regards the flora from a most 789 practical point of view. Only a small proportion of the well-known plants have uses which are mainly magical, and knowledge based upon empirical observation overshadows that derived from mystical conceptions. One does not 'doctor' wood to strengthen it against the attacks of termites or woodborers; one selects the proper tree. In 90 out of 100 cases the quality of the wood, not any magical manipulation, is important for the purpose to which it is put, especially if the purpose is economic; and it is in this sense that empirical knowledge is highly developed. Even in the medical 824 sphere, which is predominantly magical, the ordinary man places his 757 faith in the observed action of the herb he uses. The cure may be merely violent internal disturbances, which, in view of the supposed nature of the illness, may be regarded as necessary. The use is not for that reason [753] magical. Many diseases are conceived to have their seat in the stomach; they are to be thrown out by a purgative; and for them purgatives are [755] used with a vengeance. Among doctors, of course, all sorts of magical remedies are added; but that is the sphere of the specialist. The ordinary man uses remedies of which the visible effects are empirically related to the disturbances which he conceives to be the causes of the disease.

824 From close observation of the qualities of plants, the Lovedu have arrived at some classification of the flora. They recognize the similarity of 192 plants of the same genus and, if external likeness is a matter of practical interest, there is often a similarity of the word used to designate the various species of the genus. This does not mean that they proceed upon genetic principles; to anatomical similarities in flowers, for instance, they are quite indifferent. If the qualities of two plants of the same genus are to their way of thinking significantly similar, the plants might receive names that are similar; if the qualities are dissimilar, they often know that the two plants are related, though they have different names. The same species modified in its external features by different environments is often given the same name. Species of the same genus are likewise sometimes distinguished by qualifications of the generic name. *Khiphadwa* of the plateau (*kha naha*) is, for instance, *Gymnosporia senegalensis*; *Khiphadwa* of stony places (*kha makhwareni*) is *Gymnosporia buxifolia*. Again, *muduwo*, *muduwatsi*, *muduwatisbi*, and *muduwolisiga*, all containing the root *duw-*, are all species of *Combretum*. On the other hand, *mugavi*, *mukwidi*, and *muhahela thudu* are also species of *Combretum*, but there are

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good reasons for the different names; the anatomical similarities are known, but the uses and other aspects are more important and determine the name. Anatomical differences, clearly recognized, do not stand in the way of designating very different epiphytic plants which secrete 'birdlime' (*ʋulebo*) by the one name, *khilebo*. What determines nomenclature are not only striking physical features, such as peculiar leaves and seeds, but also a significant relationship with natural phenomena or, most usually, an important use. The variety of unconnected principles used upsets the symmetry, from our point of view, of the classification. But it must not lead us to think that there has been no close observation of the forms and venation of leaves, the taste and smell of the wood, and so on. The details of the flower, except for colour, general shape and size, are regarded as unimportant for purposes of identification. Yet they can name the poorest specimens and wonder why we want flowers and fruit before we can name a plant. The use of many cross classifications is not a burden to the memory, because the names link the plants to their practical uses.

The subject is much too large for adequate treatment here. Yet a few examples, illustrating the general outlook, might be of value. Because of its broad, flat leaves, *Inulata glomerata* is called *zʋʋɛ ya ɖou* (the ear of an elephant). The flower of *Wormskioldia longipedunculata*, which is small and crimson and peers through the grass, suggests the name *leiƥ la dau* (the eye of a lion). The baobab is *khiʋuyu*, something inordinately fat and squat; the root *ʋu-* also occurs in the names of those fat caterpillars that attack mealies, of the hippopotamus, and of the enormous termite queen. Apt as well as picturesque are such names as *khiʋede kha muri* (the liver of the tree), for all fungi; *leada la khithii* (the egg of the sunbird), for a variety of the groundnut; *Voandezia subterranea*, *moƴkhakhilemo* (scent of spring) for *Phyllanthus reticulatus*, the flowers of which fragrantly herald the spring, and many others. One might think that those who named the plants were poets. Perhaps they were, because there is no lack of exquisite poetry in the beautiful praise songs that are the real literature of the people.

But their interests are many-sided and they do not scorn to have more mundane names. Here are a few that bear upon economic uses. For weaving (*hu loha*) baskets they use the *muloha* plant, *Acacia ataxacantha*; *mulɛde-muloha-ƭhɔɖɔ*, our *Sida cordifolia*, is pliable (*hu leda*), like other *mulɛde* plants, all of which are of the genus *Triumfetta*, and for that reason specially suitable for weaving beer sieves (*hu loha ƭhɔɖɔ*). *Mukhaƭisa*, our *Indigofera eriocarpa*, is their herdboys' milk-curdler (*hu khaƭisa*, to cause milk to curdle). The sap of *muilantshe*, which we call *Asclepias stellifera*, they use to repel flies (*hu ila ntshe*) from the open wounds of cattle. With the branches of *Ɗasimana-ʋa-a khaɖa*, a stinging weed which we appropriately dignify with the name *Achyranthus aspera*, youngsters (*ʋasimana*) playfully fight one another.

Consider also, lest we think that the genius for giving apt names has been lost, the following few recently introduced plants. The pineapple, because of its prickly, xerophytic bracts, gets the same name as the aloes, *khiƭuzi*. The scent of the khaki weed calls to mind hemp, *baja*, and so is

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called the small hemp, *khihajahajani*. The large pods of *legamasi*, a peanut of the *musazwitika* variety, are likened to leggings, for which they use a corruption of the Afrikaans word *kamasters*. *Khithava-mansi* in scientific nomenclature is *Amaranthus spinous* but, for all that, it pricks the 'missus' (*hu fhava musisi*). We link the sunflower with the sun, but they call it *munɔntshakhudhu*, fattener of the fowls, because the unaccountable European, instead of leaving fowls to their own devices, fattens them (*hu nɔntsha*) with its seeds. It would be tedious to give more of these interesting names. Suffice it to say that, upon whatever principle they are given, they furnish examples of close observation, of humour and poetry, and of practical sense.

In the command that the Lovedu have over the material supplied by vegetation, knowledge of the suitability of the plant to be used is by far the most impressive aspect. By contrast, preparation of the material, by seasoning or otherwise, and skilful or artistic manipulation to produce the required result lag far behind. Utility rather than artistic beauty is the main consideration; a carelessly made article, generally speaking, serves its purpose as well as one well executed. There is not much specialization and a high standard of workmanship is not aimed at; most men know what wood to select and how to make a great variety of ordinary household articles. Special skill is needed for making wooden dishes, drums, and milk pails. The most skilled work is perhaps the making of baskets (*zwirudwana*), which is done by men. This is not the place to describe the technique of the arts and crafts; all we need insist upon is the widespread knowledge of the virtues and defects of the plants that can be used.

Modern conditions have brought about a serious decline in craftsmanship and in familiarity with the vegetation. Schoolboys no longer have the extensive opportunities of learning veld-lore which herding provided. Herding is to them hardly an institutionalized induction into nature study; instead of being a part of life itself, it assumes the aspect of distasteful labour. The introduction of European articles also lessens the interest in the qualities of the vegetation. Yet these influences are in their infancy. They have made some impression upon the material elements of the culture, but they have tended to impoverish rather than to replace the old. You see petrol tins side by side with water pots, ugly sacks ousting the picturesque granaries, patched pieces of boxwood replacing reed doors, cast-off European clothes instead of graceful coverings of skin, machine-made blankets beside hand-woven grass mats, and axes and knives, no longer from the smithy, but only from the stores.

More serious is the threat to the traditional outlook. Christianity stresses the virtue of being different from the pagan, but the status of Europeanized Natives is precarious both in and outside the tribe, and there is no co-ordinated view of life that can successfully combat the subtle economic onslaught of European culture. And, since 1938, the legislative prohibition of cutting down trees, except after permission having been obtained and a fee paid, threatens a change of which the results cannot be foreseen. Many trees, and among them some essential for the crafts, may not be cut down at all. The inconvenience of walking

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does the initiation. There are no special burial rites associated with the cult. There is, however, a vague belief that injury to a snake in the village may in some cases harm a possessed person, an interesting belief in view of the fact that there is so little trace in Lovedu religion of the Zulu idea that ancestral spirits manifest themselves in snakes.

There is a special relationship between a possessed person and the doctor who initiated him: every year when the medicine needs renewal, beer or *morula* cider is prepared, the doctor, who comes with a number of disciples and attendants, is called and there is a great dance of the possessed often lasting several days. This is 'dancing for medicine' (*hu vinɗla tshidi*). Some possessed people have to be specially doctored before drinking the first *morula* cider and the *morula* season is always a time of *lelɔpɔ* gatherings; others are required to contribute corn at harvest time for a large *lelɔpɔ* dance at the home of the doctor. These gatherings, at which a goat may be slaughtered in addition to the cider provided, add greatly to the prestige of the doctor. There is sometimes considerable jealousy between *malɔpɔ* doctors, who, with those initiated by them, may form rival schools. Some doctors refuse to allow their followers to dance with those initiated by other doctors without special permission. At one seance, at which there had been some unpleasantness, the doctor smeared some powder into incisions on the neck, tongue, crown, and sides of the heads of her disciples. Then, taking some medicated water in her mouth, she squirted (*hu phasa*), saying, 'I "place" you. Don't you dance any more. I don't like dancing every day without my special permission. Any *lelɔpɔ* who dances where you are dancing will break her leg or be badly hurt.' The remainder of the water was given them to drink.

An interesting feature of the cult of possession is that many people when the spirit is upon them speak in a foreign tongue, said to be Thɔvɔb or Kharanga. Investigation into this matter, however, shows that this is not as startling a phenomenon as it might appear. When possessed, a person for the most part sits silent unless he is a doctor. If he speaks at all, this is in monosyllables, for all his wants and messages are conveyed in song. *Lelɔpɔ* songs are stereotyped and known to many because the uninitiated have to join in the refrain when rattling the accompaniment. In these songs there is usually a number of foreign words, though many consist purely of meaningless sounds, such as '*We le wee eva o wee wee wee wana wee*'. Often peculiarities in the pronunciation of vowels are interpreted as Thɔvɔb. When the refrain begun (*hu suma*) by the possessed person has been taken up by the chorus, he continues with the song or interpolates his own words, usually Sotho with a few foreign words interspersed, till he wishes to stop. In this way he makes known his wishes. It quite frequently happens that no one understands the gibberish of the possessed person, and doctors generally have an attendant who interprets what they wish to convey. There are, however, numerous well-known words in general use by people when their spirit is upon them—for instance, *mufoto* or *movoto* for *lefɔla* (snuff), *bula* or *mvula* for *meetse* (water), *va ga mbaya* for *va ga ntiya* (they may beat me), *kaya* for *hae* (home). But many possessed people speak pure Sotho, and it is recognized that a newly initiated person may not

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794 533 192 know Thɔvɔb. The Lovedu themselves are not critical, and the usual reply when one expresses any doubt about the genuineness of the possessed or the possibility of fraud is, 'If they were not really possessed how could they speak a strange tongue?'

794 It is not our purpose to discuss the psychology of possession among the Lovedu. We should, however, point out that it is in no way associated with abnormalities of character or with crises in the life of the individual. Its symptoms are not of a nervous nature, such as indicate *ukuthwasa* among Nguni; there are, except when the spirit descends upon them, no twitchings, uncontrollable hiccups are unknown; members of the cult are not hysterical or mentally unbalanced nor can they be distinguished in their daily activities from others. There is no change in the personality of the individual when his spirit is upon him, although some of them sing in a low voice when possessed by a man and others dance in a peculiar way. Nor is there any difference to be seen between one possessing spirit and another in the same individual: when his second spirit comes upon a possessed person, it often continues the conversation where the first spirit left off, and the only indication of its arrival may be its own announcement in a song or perhaps gulping movements and a gentle falling back of the patient. Finally, of interest psychologically was the farewell dance of all *malɔpɔ* just before the *vyali* initiation for girls in September, 1938. Their songs and dances were taboo during the period of the 'school' as they were not allowed to compete with those of the *vyali* which had not yet ended in October, 1939. We must not conclude from this or from the fact that Christians do not become *malɔpɔ* that possession is imposture. There are wide avenues for fraud, but most *malɔpɔ* are genuine victims of mass-suggestion. The cult, though open to men, is confined largely to women. It is not associated with gifts of prophecy or the finding of lost objects, and there are no revelations concerning the Beyond.

The bearing of the possessed when not dancing is quiet and dignified and detached in contrast to the diabolical manifestations of the possessed in Europe in the Middle Ages. It appears to be neither a paranoic nor a compensatory phenomenon. We dare not relate trance experience with neuroses or psychoses, for we need to orientate ourselves, not from our own, but from a wider relativistic psychology or psychopathology; the mental reflects the cultural configuration and the disposition of drives in the mind must be viewed relatively to the disposition of forces in the culture. The whole cult among the Lovedu is remarkably stereotyped; behaviour under the influence of the spirit, the songs, the things demanded by spirits, conform to a type. Even the possessing spirits themselves are stereotyped, being almost always grandparents.

It is our impression that if any one in the least degree suggestible were made to dance without sustenance for several days in the noise and excitement of seances, he would be liable to fall down exhausted and respond in the traditional manner to the attentions of the women. But not all initiations are successful. In one case witnessed by us, the young woman quite obviously did not want to become possessed: she danced in a half-hearted manner and, under the pretext of tending her baby, kept